

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SEOUL 08300 160300Z

14

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-07 AGRE-00 AID-05 CEA-01

CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DLOS-06 DODE-00

DOT-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-02

INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

NSF-01 OES-06 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAL-01 SCA-01 /120 W
----- 087080

P R 160226Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0048

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 8300

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR KS KN

SUBJ: RETURN OF CAPTURED ROK FISHING BOAT

SUMMARY: ROK FISHING BOAT AND ENTIRE CREW RETURNED TO SOUTH KOREA OCTOBER 14 AFTER 46-DAY ABSENCE AND WERE IMMEDIATELY TAKEN FOR DEBRIEFING BY KCIA. REPRESENTATIVE OF RED CROSS, WHICH HAD HANDLED MESSAGES TO NORTH DURING CREW'S CONFINEMENT, AND OTHER ROK OBSERVERS SAW LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF CHANGE IN NORTH'S POLICY TOWARD SOUTH. END SUMMARY.

1. SHINJIN-HO #3, SQUID FISHING VESSEL WHICH WAS KIDNAPPED BY NORTH KOREA (NK) LAST AUGUST 30, RETURNED TO HOME PORT OF SOK-CH'O OCTOBER 14 WITH ALL 23 MEMBERS OF CREW. VESSEL, WHICH WAS RELEASED FROM WON-SAN HARBOR ABOUT 1700 OCTOBER 13, REACHED AREA OF FISHING LIMIT LINE ABOUT 0100 OCTOBER 14 AND WAS DISCOVERED BY A ROK NAVY PATROL BOAT AT ABOUT 0730. ON ARRIVAL SOK-CH'O CITY ABOUT 1500, CREW MEMBERS WERE PERMITTED TO WAVE TO THEIR FAMILIES, RELATIVES AND LOOKERS-ON; THEY THEN
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SEOUL 08300 160300Z

BOARDED WAITING BUSES (DESTINATION UNDISCLOSED). NEWSPAPER

ACCOUNTS SAID THAT CREW LOOKED "TIRED AND HAGGARD".

2. FISHING BOAT CREW RELEASES HAVE BEEN MADE BEFORE, BUT THIS ONE IS UNUSUAL IN SEVERAL RESPECTS ACCORDING SOUTH-NORTH COORDINATING COMMITTEE, KOREAN NATIONAL RED CROSS AND MOFA SOURCES AS WELL AS OUR OWN RECOLLECTIONS: 1) IT WAS RELATIVELY QUICK AND CONCILIATORY FROM FIRST SURPRISINGLY FAST NK ANNOUNCEMENT OF CAPTURE; 2) NK PRESS CONFERENCE AND STATEMENTS CONTAIN "NO IRRITATING OR BELLIGERENT REMARKS" ACCORDING MOFA INFORMATION OFFICER; 3) NKRC SPOKESMAN YI TON-BOK SOMEWHAT DOWNPLAYS OTHER NEW ELEMENTS (COMMENT: WE DO NOT) AND CLAIMS NEW ELEMENT WAS IN FACT INVOLVEMENT OF KNRC.

3. AS REGARDS CONCILIATORY NATURE NK ACTIONS, ROKG OFFICIALS ARE OBVIOUSLY INTERESTED IN IT AND PRESS EDITORIALS HAVE IN THE MAIN EXPRESSED CAUTIOUS RECEPTIVITY TO DEVELOPMENT. HOWEVER, ROKS DO NOT AT PRESENT SEE RELEASE AS INDICATING SHIFT IN NK POLICY; WHILE BOTH KNRC AND MOFA OFFICIALS THOUGHT RELEASE MIGHT BE RELATED TO BROADER POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN NK, IN WORDS OF ONE INTERPRETER THEY SEE THIS GENERALLY AS BEING PERIOD FOR NK TO "RETREAT ONE STEP IN ORDER TO ADVANCE TWO."

4. KNRC, WHICH WAS INTERESTED IN PROMOTING SOUTH-NORTH DIALOGUE, BECAME INVOLVED WHEN JUST AFTER CAPTURE IT SENT SOFT LINE MESSAGE TO NORTH ADMITTING ROK BOAT HAD MADE MISTAKE. FORMERLY, IN SIMILAR INCIDENTS, BROADCASTS TO OBTAIN RELEASE WERE MADE BY MINISTER OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION AND THESE WOULD HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT THIS TIME ACCORDING TO YI TONG BOK, SPOKESMAN FOR SOUTH-NORTH COORDINATING COMMITTEE. KNRC'S APPROACH WAS USEFUL, YI ADDS, BECAUSE IT DEPRIVED NORTH OF CHANCE TO MAKE PROPAGANDA. BUT KNRC MILD APPROACH MAY IN FACT HAVE MET WITH HIGHER LEVEL ROKG DISFAVOR SINCE IN OUTCOME, TO EVIDENT CHAGRIN OF ITS OFFICERS, KNRC WAS CUT OUT OF FINAL ACT OF RECEIVING FISHERMEN BY FISHERIES AUTHORITIES.
SNEIDER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SHIP DETENTION, FISHING BOATS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SEOUL08300
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760388-1035
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761044/aaaabmfg.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 MAY 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <23 SEP 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RETURN OF CAPTURED ROK FISHING BOAT SUMMARY: ROK FISHING BOAT AND ENTIRE CREW RETURNED TO SOUTH KOREA OCTOBER 14 AFTER 46-DAY ABSENCE AND WERE IMM
TAGS: PFOR, EWWT, KS, KN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006